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It is nevertheless surprising, in view of all the criticism of the European international technology groupings like Eldo (for rockets), Esro (for space research) and Cets (for telecommunications) whose narrowly compartmentalised interests make them cumbersome and crisis-ridden institutions, that the commission should not also be advocating a more broadly based science policy for the community. But the present period of common market stagnation throws into unusually high relief the normal personal and institutional jealousies, as well as the national loyalties, of the commissioners. The common market commission is doing its best to fend off Euratom's claim to start a science policy, while M. Robert Marjolin is a good European only when it suits the French government. There is no sign that General de Gaulle is interested in a science policy which would go beyond ad hoc collaboration on limited projects. Know-how is the only British asset that the French government covets, and if the British could be induced to part with it while remaining outside the European community, then General de Gaulle could congratulate himself on having won on the swings and the roundabouts.

As usual, the European Parliament failed to understand the sense of the commission's proposals. The long-winded and high-minded oratory remained consistently out of touch with political realities, and made even the Council of Europe's debates seem urgent and lively. But then the Council of Europe actually does have a science policy of a sort, even if it is only concerned with air pollution.

France

How to stop a trial

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Quand c'est fini, says the French song, ça recommence. On Tuesday the lengthy Ben Barka case was drawing to an end. Maître Floriot was pleading for the two policemen. The two counsels for Lopez were to speak on Wednesday, the expected day of the verdict. The day after that was to see the trial and verdict for those charged in absentia, including the Moroccans headed by General Oufkir. But on Tuesday afternoon occurred the first real hitch in a trial which up to then had seemed very well stage-managed. A cable from Rabat brought the sensational news that Major Ahmed Dlimi, head of the security police and right-hand man of General Oufkir, had left Morocco to give himself up to French justice.

Before leaving, Major Dlimi had sent a letter to King Hassan. As *Le Monde* put it, the letter "was written with such sovereign art that it surprised by any of its terms." In it, Major Dlimi argued that since his country was involved in the Paris trial and

decided to face the French court before the trial ended.

Yet this was not the end of the suspense. It was only 24 hours later, on Wednesday afternoon, that Dlimi appeared in the courtyard of the Paris tribunal and was arrested. What was the purpose of this last-minute Moroccan operation? In Paris views differed. But by Thursday the impression was gaining ground that this was a joint move to bury the whole affair. Dlimi's lawyers have already requested a court of appeal to decide that, in keeping with the Franco-Moroccan convention, their client should be tried by a Moroccan court. The French court of appeal (*court de cassation*) usually takes a long time to reach a decision. In the meantime the Ben Barka case is suspended. Two of the minor defendants were actually granted provisional freedom. Everything seems set for a very long suspension. Could Tuesday's apparent hitch really have been a triumph of stage-management?

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Italy

Togliatti no, Marx yes

FROM OUR ROME CORRESPONDENT

The new marxist-leninist party founded in Leghorn last Sunday by disaffected communists is only one, and probably not the most important, symptom of communist discontent in Italy. The real "Chinese," most observers reckon, are still inside the party where they can do more harm than by coming into the open. So far the communist papers have vied with the obtuse part of the rest of the press in making fun of the proceedings in Leghorn.

This is the holy city of Italian communism: here in 1921 a group of outstanding personalities including Gramsci, Bordiga and the then little known Togliatti founded the Italian communist party after breaking with the socialists. The theatre where they assembled was bombed during the war but a plaque on its ruins commemorates the historic occasion. Here the small band of nostalgics marched on Sunday to raise their emblems, and with the aim of erasing the unworthy name of Togliatti from those of the founding fathers. One malicious report said that after they had gone a group of orthodox communists went to erase the erosion and in doing so found they had burnished up the name of Stalin. Unquestionably the members of the new splinter party are few and obscure: the delegates in Leghorn were less than a hundred and included no names of national prestige.

In this respect the split differs essentially from the ideological breach which occurred in the Nenni socialist party three years ago. Four of the party's more popular and more brilliant leaders, walked out to found the

marxist group to the left of the communists. The new splinter party, the Partito Comunista d'Italia Marxista-Leninista, is led by one Vincenzo Misefari. He is a Calabrian, but this does not seem to indicate a close connection with the dissident communist movement in the south. This was represented in Leghorn by Signor Aldo Pugliese, ex-mayor of Spezzano Albanese and acknowledged leader of a peasant revolt against the official party leadership. But whether Signor Pugliese actually adhered to the new party is uncertain. It appears to represent some of the younger rebels among the industrial workers of north and central Italy, rather than the more serious and stubborn but as yet hardly articulate disaffection of the peasants in the south. It stands for the pure doctrine: the destruction of the bourgeois state, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. It denies the possibility of peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism, and derides the communist leaders for their bourgeois proclivities, accusing them of connivance with the pro-American policies of the Kremlin.

In the present state of Italian politics, with economic revival in the air and the left-centre coalition gaining strength from the imminent unification of the socialists, it does not seem likely that these purists can offer much to their prospective supporters. The communist party is annoyed by the crack in its carefully cultivated image of unity, but probably not seriously alarmed. It is far more worried by the spread of disaffection in the south. Pundits claim that, while the new party is supported by China, the Calabrian peasants are encouraged from Tirana, which is said to appeal to the Albanian element in the population. This is far-fetched. Albanian immigration goes back to the fifteenth century. In reality the peasants have lost faith in everyone, Chinese, Albanians, Kremlin and all, and first and foremost in the Italian communist leaders. What happens in the south will depend ultimately on whether the socialists in turn are able to convince the peasants that they have their interests at heart.

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